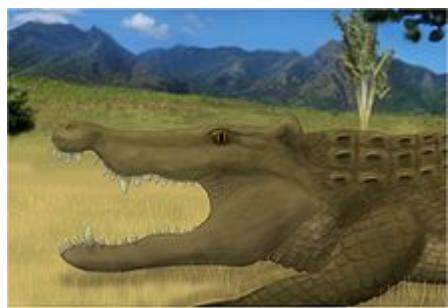


# Voay

**Voay** is an extinct genus of crocodile from Madagascar and includes only one species—*V. robustus*. Numerous subfossils have been found, including complete skulls as well as vertebrae and osteoderms from such places as Ambolisatra and Antsirabe. The genus is thought to have become extinct relatively recently during the Holocene. It has even been suggested to have disappeared in the extinction event that wiped out much of the endemic megafauna such as the elephant bird following the arrival of humans to Madagascar around 2000 years ago.<sup>[1]</sup> Its name comes from the Malagasy word for crocodile.



Reconstruction of *V. robustus*

they were to have coexisted with one another. It has recently been proposed that the Nile crocodile only migrated to the island from mainland Africa after *V. robustus* had gone extinct in Madagascar.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Description

One unusual feature of *V. robustus* that distinguishes it from other crocodilians is the presence of prominent "horns" extending from the posterior portion of the skull. They are actually the posterolaterally extended corners of the squamosal bone. Other related crocodilians such as *Aldabrachampsus* also had similar bony projections, although in *Aldabrachampsus* these projections were more like crests than horns.<sup>[3]</sup> Another diagnostic characteristic is the near-exclusion of the nasals from the external naris. It had a shorter and deeper snout than the extant *Crocodylus niloticus*, as well as relatively robust limbs. The osteoderms had tall keels and were dorsally symmetrical with curved lateral margins, running the entire length of the postcranial body.<sup>[4]</sup>

*V. robustus* has been estimated to have obtained lengths up to 5 m (16.4 ft) and a weight of 170 kg (375 lbs).<sup>[5]</sup> These estimates suggest that *V. robustus* was the largest predator to have existed in Madagascar in recent times.

### Voay

Temporal range: Pleistocene — Holocene, 0.126–0.002 Ma

PreЄ Є OS D C P T J K PgN



Skull, American Museum of Natural History

### Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Reptilia
Order:	Crocodilia
Family:	Crocodylidae
Subfamily:	Crocodylinae
Genus:	†Voay Brochu, 2007

### Type species

#### †*Voay robustus*

(Grandidier & Vaillant, 1872)

### Synonyms

***Crocodylus robustus*** Grandidier & Vaillant, 1872

# Phylogenetics

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When *V. robustus* was first described in 1872, it was originally assigned to the genus *Crocodylus*.<sup>[6]</sup> However, it is now known to have had more in common with the extant *Osteolaemus*, or dwarf crocodile, than *Crocodylus*. Some features it shares with *Osteolaemus* include a depressed pterygoid surface that forms a choanal "neck" on the palate. Because it was not close enough to be placed in the same genus as the dwarf crocodile, it was assigned to the new genus in 2007. Before this reassignment, the species was considered by some to be synonymous with *Crocodylus niloticus*. However, this was most likely due to a misinterpretation of remains from the living *C. niloticus* with *V. robustus* and the poor description of the original material from which the species was described.<sup>[7][8]</sup>

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